

# Fruit

## This week's recipes

Find out how to use figs to relieve constipation and hops for a good night's sleep, how to make a soothing face mask from kiwis and papayas, and how to cook an immunity-boosting soup.

These recipes are taken from the book 'Grow Your Own Drugs', published by HarperCollins.

## Syrup of figs for constipation

18 g dried senna podsml boiling waterfresh figs, quarteredg sugarJuice of 1 lemon

1. Place the senna pods in a glass bowl and pour over the boiling water. Leave to steep for about 30 minutes, then strain through a sieve or piece of muslin into a blender.
2. Add the figs and sugar to the senna infusion and whizz until smooth.
3. Pour into a saucepan, and heat slowly to reduce, stirring occasionally. You want to end up with a thick, glossy sugar-like syrup - this will probably take about 25 minutes. Add the lemon juice and stir in well.
4. Take off the heat and pour the syrup into a sterilized 150 ml bottle.

USE: Shake well before use. Take 2 tsp before bed when needed. Don't use for more than a few days at a time, or if you have severe abdominal pain.

STORAGE: Keeps in the refrigerator for 3-4 weeks.

## Goji berry and chicken soup for colds and flu

2 tbsp dried echinacea rootml water, freshly boiledtbsp goji berries, fresh or driedlitres chicken stock (homemade or from stock cubes)chicken thighs or drumsticks (preferably organic)large onions, peeled and slicedshiitake mushrooms, thinly slicedcm root ginger, peeled and shreddedfresh medium-sized chillies, finely slicedgarlic cloves,choppedextra sliced ginger and chillis, to serve

1. Combine the dried echinacea root with the water in a bowl to make a simple infusion. In another bowl, pour just enough cold water over the goji berries to cover, and leave to rehydrate. Set the echinacea and goji berries aside and leave to stand.
2. Place the stock and chicken pieces in a large pan or slow cooker. Add the sliced onions, mushrooms, ginger and chillies and place around the chicken in the pan. On a very low heat, simmer gently for 1 1/2 - 2 hours, or until the chicken is tender and falls apart. Take off the heat.
3. Five minutes before serving, add the goji berries and chopped garlic. Finally, strain the echinacea infusion and add this to the soup, reheating if necessary.
4. Serve by ladling into bowls and garnishing with sliced ginger and chilli for an extra kick.

USE: Makes enough for 4. Can be eaten with noodles, if wished.

## Hops pillow for insomnia

For a pillow about 32 x 23 cm:handfuls dried hops flowershandfuls dried lavender flowers

1. To dry the hops and lavender yourself, tie them in bunches and hang upside down in a well-ventilated space out of direct sunlight for 2 weeks. Alternatively, place in a low oven (about 100C) for 30 minutes or so until dry and crispy. Strip the flowers off the larger or harder stalks.
2. Put equal handfuls of dried hops and lavender flowers into a cotton pillowcase, and seal the end.

USE: Place the pillow under or beside your head to induce sleep.

## Kiwi and papaya face mask

1 kiwi fruit, peeled juice of 1 lime/2 papayasachets vegetable gelatine

1. Mash the kiwi fruit through a sieve into a bowl. Add the lime juice to the kiwi mixture.
2. Scoop the seeds from the papaya, and mash the flesh on a chopping board using a fork (this makes it slightly easier to press through the sieve). Press the papaya through a sieve into a separate bowl and mix with the vegetable gelatine using a fork.
3. Put the bowl with the papaya mixture over a saucepan of boiling water and stir constantly until it forms a wallpaper-paste consistency. Take off immediately and continue to stir. Add the kiwi fruit juice slowly, bit by bit, stirring all the time. Leave to cool.

USE When cool or lukewarm, apply the gel to face, avoiding the eye area, and leave for 10 minutes to 1 hour. Wash off with warm water.

STORAGE Most effective when used as soon as possible. Keeps in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours.